

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Representatives Lee Terry (R-NE) votes yes on H. Res. 6 to offer more transparency in the federal government. However, the bill did not include increased penalties for government officials that betray the public's trust.

Terry issued the following statement after the House adopted the ethics and earmark reform piece of H. Res. 6:

"Democracy does not work without the confidence of the people. Faith in our government and leaders is not , nor should be a partisan issue. Re-establishing the trust of the public in our government is a priority. Republicans are committed to working with Democrats to do so and transparency in how our government works is central to that process.

"Last fall , the House adopted comprehensive earmark reforms that required the sponsors of all earmarks to be publicly disclosed. I am pleased to see many of the provisions authored by the Republican Majority last year are included in this bill.

"I do find it disturbing though that Republicans were shut-out of the ethics reform process under the new Democrat majority , despite their claims of partisanship. My Public Trust and Accountability Act , or PTA Act , would actually make the ethics rules stronger , a commitment that the American people deserve. The PTA Act also holds a strong key to fiscal responsibility. It is flat wrong that convicted former federal employees , such as former California Congressman Cunningham , will receive pensions after their violation of the public trust. This is a misuse of the taxpayer's dollars and those of us committed to fiscal responsibility want to end this practice.

"There are budget-saving provisions in H. Res 6 which are small victories. It is my hope that we will be able to come together , across the aisle , to balance the budget by 2012 and strengthen fiscal responsibility and accountability in order to regain the public's trust in Congress."

Lee Terry has again offered ethics legislation for the 110th Congress with the reintroduction of the Public Trust & Accountability Act (PTA Act). The legislation would deny retirement benefits for elected officials as well as federal employees convicted of certain crimes. Specifically, this legislation would amend an existing statute in Title 5 of the U.S. Code that provides for the forfeiture of retirement benefits convicted of violating national security laws, such as treason. The PTA Act would extend these penalties to include "white collar" crimes, such as embezzlement and bribery. In the 109th Congress, this legislation was included in H.R. 4975, the 527 Reform Act of 2006, and passed the House on May 3, 2006. The Reform Act of 2006 died in the Senate.

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[Click here](#) to hear Congressman Terry explain his position.

